

VZCZCXRO3414
RR RUEHDBU RUEHLN RUEHVK RUEHYG
DE RUEHAH #0385 1040914
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 140914Z APR 06
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7194
INFO RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 2540
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 1621
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 1270
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1160
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0341
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC//DHO-2/REA/NMJIC-J2//
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC//J5/RUE//
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCJ2/HSE/CCJ5//

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 000385

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FOR SCA/CEN (PERRY)
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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EAGR](#) [ETRD](#) [PGOV](#) [KFLU](#) [TX](#)
SUBJECT: WHO EXPERTS ASSIST IN TURKMENISTAN'S
PREPAREDNESS FOR AI

REFTEL: A) ASHGABAT 361 AND PREVIOUS
 B) 05 STATE 153802

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SUMMARY

11. (U) PER REFTEL B, POST PROVIDES A WEEKLY FOLLOW-UP ON AVIAN INFLUENZA. THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND MEDICAL INDUSTRY (MOHMI) AND THE WHO CO-SPONSORED A SEMINAR ON LABORATORY DIAGNOSIS AND THE PREVENTION OF AVIAN FLU APRIL 4-7. THE SEMINAR GATHERED OVER 100 PARTICIPANTS, INCLUDING EMPLOYEES OF THE NATIONAL HEALTHCARE SECTOR, SPECIALISTS ON INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND EPIDEMIOLOGY, AND SENIOR OFFICIALS FROM VARIOUS MINISTRIES AND AGENCIES, WHICH ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL AI PREVENTION PLAN. END SUMMARY.

WHO EXPERTS PRAISE TURKMENISTAN'S HEALTH PROGRAM?

12. (U) WHO EXPERTS NICOLAS FINN, CLAIRE KILPATRICK, AND ELLISON BIRMINGHAM HELD A TEACHING SEMINAR ON AI AND PANDEMIC FLU BASED ON THE UNITED KINGDOM EXPERIENCE, AND ALSO VISITED THE NATIONAL VETERINARY LABORATORY DURING THE APRIL 4-7 AI SEMINAR. IN THEIR APRIL 10 INTERVIEW TO THE NEUTRALNYI TURKMENISTAN STATE NEWSPAPER, THE EXPERTS SAID THAT PREVENTIVE MEASURES, CARRIED OUT UNDER THE GOTX'S HEALTH PROGRAM, SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED THE RISK OF AVIAN FLU IN TURKMENISTAN. EXPERT BIRMINGHAM SAID THAT SHE WAS PLEASED WITH SOME LABORATORY SETS AND GAVE UNSPECIFIED RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NATIONAL AI REFERENCE LABORATORY STAFF. THE EXPERTS SAID THEY WERE IMPRESSED BY TURKMENISTAN'S MODERN MEDICAL CENTERS AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE ABLE TO IMPLEMENT PRESIDENT NIYAZOV'S AMBITIOUS HEALTH PROGRAM.

WHO'S REAL MISSION

¶3. (SBU) ACCORDING TO USAID'S HEALTH SPECIALIST WHO MET WITH THE WHO EXPERTS ON APRIL 11, THE PURPOSE OF THE WHO TRIP WAS TO CONDUCT AN ASSESSMENT OF TURKMENISTAN'S AI RESPONSE. THE TEAM INTENDED TO VISIT AI REFERENCE LABORATORIES, AND MEET WITH LOCAL EXPERTS AND INTERNATIONAL DONORS; HOWEVER, THE MOHMI TURNED THEIR PROGRAM INTO A TEACHING SEMINAR.

GOTX ATTENDS INTERNATIONAL AI CONFERENCE

¶4. (U) On April 12, The United Nations Regional Information Networks (IRIN), a humanitarian news agency covering sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia and Iraq, reported from Ankara that Turkmenistan will attend an international conference on regional cooperation in fighting bird flu, scheduled for June 12-13 in Almaty.

Comment

¶5. (SBU) Post is disheartened that the GOTX continues to play games with the threat and prevention of AI. Misrepresenting WHO activities and most likely misquoting the experts in the newspapers, does nothing to inspire confidence among concerned parties that the GOTX is taking adequate action. End Comment.

JACOBSON